

## **FARRAGUT PARK CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

A Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is typically used to bring public opinion into the planning process for activities being contemplated by a government agency. That agency would normally develop a tasking document, approved by that agency Board, and then invite specific citizens, or citizen groups, to participate in the execution of that task. Each individual participating on the CAC must agree, in advance, to accept and fulfill the task, as approved by the Board. It is understood that the findings and recommendations of the CAC are advisory in nature, and provide one set of considerations upon which planning decisions will be made. They are the result of much hard work, analysis of presentations made by professionals, and input from the general public, and thus should be given due consideration. The tasking document provided to this CAC is included as Attachment 1.

### **I. Scope of task**

**A.** Guide the development of a work plan to address the agencies' resource management objectives.

Produce specific recommendations for implementing each of the five management issues of the Farragut State Park Natural Resources Plan (FSPNRP).

1. Ponderosa Pine Management
2. Wildfire Hazard and Risk Management
3. Western White Pine Restoration
4. Noxious Weeds
5. Visitor Use Areas

**B.** Assist the agencies in their interactions with the larger public.

1. Help to incorporate constructive criticism into the work plan.
2. Help present the final plan to the larger public.

**C.** Provide for oversight and public communication of the agencies' execution of the guidelines and constraints of the final plan.

### **II. Background and Documentation**

#### **A. Introduction**

1. The Farragut State Park Natural Resource Plan (FSPNRP) was completed in February of 2001, and subsequently approved by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) Board of Directors. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) had earlier updated its Long Range Management Plan for the Farragut Wildlife Management Area in July 1999, but this document was not referred to in the FSPNRP.

2. Based on these two documents (among others), a Draft Work Plan was announced to the public in April of 2002 for a Ponderosa Pine Restoration Project on approximately 240 acres of the Park along Lake Pend Oreille, and an open house was held on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2002 at Bayview Idaho to explain the project and receive comments. The vast majority of the public attending the open house and/or providing comment vigorously opposed this Plan, which called for extensive logging and controlled burns on approximately 165 acres of the restoration project.
3. The IDPR Board held their quarterly meeting on August 13<sup>th</sup>, when the project was put on hold, to allow more time for public comment and further Board consideration.

## **B. Farragut Citizens Advisory Committee**

1. In November, the IDPR invited ten citizens to participate on a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), which would explore options and guide development of a Work Plan to implement the FSPNRP. Those ten individuals *are*:
  - Stefany Bales – Intermountain Forest Association (resigned)
  - John Bentley – Local Area Resident (resigned)
  - Mark Compton – Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce
  - George Guedel – Bayview Chamber of Commerce & Park User
  - Harvey Richman – Park Neighbor & Park User
  - Barry Rosenberg – Kootenai Environmental Alliance
  - David Shill – Spokane Resident & Park User
  - K.J. Hackworthy-Torgeson – The Nature Conservancy (resigned)
  - Mark Weadick – Citizen & Independent Consulting Forester
  - Susan Weller – Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society (deceased)
2. In addition to the 10 CAC members, there are three agency representatives who have been regularly participating in CAC activities. They are:
  - Dennis Woolford – IDPR representative & CAC meeting facilitator
  - David Leptich – IDFG representative & CAC minutes
  - Ron Fryzowski – Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) consulting forester
3. The first meeting was held on December 2, 2002, when a number of procedural issues were resolved, and the CAC tasking was discussed. A second meeting was held on January 7, 2003 when the IDPR/IDFG responded to a number of issues, which came up in the first meeting. A task statement was provided and discussed extensively. On January 27<sup>th</sup>, six CAC members met to discuss modifications to the task statement, but at the third regular meeting the next day, Mr. David White (IDPR) indicated that the CAC task statement was an IDPR document and was not negotiable with the CAC. Mr. Bentley regretted that this document had not been made available earlier, and resigned from the CAC. Ms. Torgeson was never able to

participate in any of the CAC meetings and activities, due to other commitments, and also resigned.

### **C. CAC activities**

During the 4-month period from February to May 2003, the CAC participated in a series of visitations and lectures from experts, in order to develop a basis for the consensus findings and recommendations. Farragut State Park was visited three times:

1. On February 8<sup>th</sup>, the CAC members visited Farragut Park for an on-the-ground overview of the Park's natural resources.
2. On March 8<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Leon Neuenschwander, a co-author of the FSPNRP, accompanied the CAC and reviewed the fire ecology of timber stands within the Park (see Attachment # 2).
3. On May 13<sup>th</sup>, Drs. Arthur & Catherine Partridge accompanied the CAC along with Dan Brown Resource Manager with the IDL. Drs. Partridge and Mr. Brown commented on the forest ecology of the lakeshore area (see Attachments # 3 & # 4).
4. On April 10<sup>th</sup> the CAC toured the Tubbs Hill ice storm project area in Coeur d'Alene with Mike Denney, IDL Forest Fire Warden; Dan Brown; & Karen Haskew, City of Coeur d'Alene Urban Forester. Prescribed burns were viewed in ponderosa pine on the south aspects of the Hill.
5. On April 22<sup>nd</sup> the CAC toured logging and prescribed burn areas of Heyburn State Park with members of the Park staff. This area was part of the Heyburn State Park ponderosa pine restoration program, started in 1993.
6. On April 29<sup>th</sup> the CAC received briefings from Don Wagner (IDL Fire Behavior Expert) regarding fire behavior models specific to Farragut State Park (see Attachment # 5).
7. On May 27<sup>th</sup> Nina Eckberg (Kootenai County Noxious Weed Specialist) provided information and answered questions regarding the spread of knapweed and hawkweed in the Park.
8. The CAC also held regular monthly meetings to discuss findings and conclusions, as well as to identify and plan for future activities. These regular 2003 meetings were held on February 25<sup>th</sup>, March 25<sup>th</sup>, April 29<sup>th</sup> and May 27<sup>th</sup>. At the end of May, Ms. Bales resigned from the CAC, having participated in only a very limited number of CAC activities.
9. On March 11<sup>th</sup>, The CAC conducted an open house (as required by the agency tasking) in order to take public testimony regarding the 5 management areas listed in the FSPNRP. The document was made available on the Internet, at the Park visitor center, and at the IDPR regional office. Comments were taken orally, in writing and via the Internet (see Attachment # 6). Attachment # 6 only includes the verbal comments. The written comments, including those taken via the Internet, were given significant weight and are available upon request. Each comment was reviewed and absorbed by the CAC members, so that public opinion could be

fully considered in making the final recommendations. The CAC will present its final recommendations and findings to the public on September 18, 2003.

10. The 5 management area were each described and comments were taken specific to each area as follows:

- a. Ponderosa Pine Management
- b. Wildfire Hazard and Risk Management: Protecting People and Park Facilities.
- c. Western White Pine Restoration
- d. Noxious Weeds: Presence and Management
- e. Visitor Use Areas: Visitor Impacts and Management

#### **D. CAC Consensus**

The CAC has been meeting for eight months. On May 20<sup>th</sup>, and again on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2003 the CAC met (without agency participation) to develop a list of findings, which could be used as the basis for recommendations made in each of the five FSPNRP management areas. These findings are based on all of the information accumulated during CAC meetings and field trips. Significant emphasis was placed on public opinion gleaned from the open house comments. The CAC had to deal with conflicting opinions from experts as well as the public. After extensive discussion, negotiation and compromise, all seven CAC members reached agreement on the following recommendations.

### **III. Citizens Advisory Committee Recommendations and Findings**

*For the purpose of this document the CAC decided on the following definitions:*

- 1. The lakeshore area extends from Idlewilde Bay shoreline, up to an elevation of 2,231 feet (FSPNRP page 44). The area incorporates the steeper lakeshore property visible from the lake, and areas of heavy recreation use including the campgrounds.*
- 2. A large tree is, as defined by the CAC is 20" DBH (diameter as measured 4-1/2 feet above the ground), and larger of any species.*

#### **A. General forest management**

The following recommendations pertain to both the ponderosa pine management and white pine restoration areas.

1. Tree stand, project and silvicultural boundaries should be defined on the ground with Global Positioning System (GPS) before the agencies make any site-specific work plans.
2. In the future, when logging is considered, citizens' input should be considered and incorporated by the agencies during the work plan development. The citizens' recommendations shall become part of the public record.

3. If logging is done, it should be conducted after September 10th and before spring breakup in order to minimize impact to the forest floor and public use. It should also be conducted so as to have minimal soil impact. Precommercial thinning in pine stands should be conducted from August through November in order to minimize the risk of insect buildup.
4. There should be no logging or burning during the breeding bird season—mid-May through July.
5. Post-logging and thinning cleanup should be accomplished to reduce the fire hazard to an acceptable risk and maintain aesthetics acceptable to Park users.
6. Revenues generated from timber sales in Farragut Park (which includes Fish & Game ownership) should be held in reserve for FSPNRP non-commercial, natural resource management projects at Farragut Park such as pre-commercial thinning, planting, weed control, etc.
7. On the parade grounds and other areas appropriate for reforestation of ponderosa pine, western larch and blister rust resistant white pine should be encouraged. We recommend planting these species on appropriate Forest Habitat Types (sites) to speed stand establishment. Multi-species should always be planted and existing natural reproduction should be kept as part of the stand being established.
8. All large trees, except those posing a public hazard, regardless of location in the park, should be protected.

#### **B. Ponderosa pine management**

1. It is recommended that there be no logging in the Lakeshore area based on high public use and concern for maintaining the aesthetic values associated with existing forest (see "F" for further reference).
2. In order to meet the objectives of the (FSPNRP), logging to promote ponderosa pine management may be considered in other areas of the Park, excluding the lakeshore area as defined herein. This does not preclude the removal of public hazard trees as is currently practiced by the Park. In the event of an unusual condition such as an ice storm, salvage logging may be considered. If such an event should occur, the logging and burning prescriptions should be similar to those used during the ice storm salvage logging of Tubbs Hill (spring 1997).
3. The CAC recommends precommercial thinning in overcrowded stands in areas such as Pump house 8 and the south side of Highway 54.

#### **C. White pine restoration**

1. CAC agrees with the need to restore western white pine as a species component within stands on appropriate Forest Habitat Types. Planting stock

should be from blister rust resistant sources. Western larch should also be planted in order to enhance species diversity within these stands.

2. The CAC recommends selective timber harvest as an appropriate management activity for the removal of stagnated low vigor lodgepole pine overstory, and to provide openings for natural regeneration and the planting of blister rust resistant white pine.

#### **D. Wild fire hazard and risk management**

Over crowded tree stands could raise the fire hazard. The precommercial thinning of these stands, while raising a short-term fire hazard, could in the long term reduce the fire hazard, maintain stand health and improve the aesthetics for the Park users.

1. Low intensity controlled burns, mowing or other mechanical means should be used in areas like the parade grounds to reduce the fire hazard.
2. Fire behavior predictions are based on models using an “average bad” fire weather situation as noted in the FSPNRP, page 29. As fire weather conditions change there will be a corresponding change in fire behavior. We agree with the Idaho Department of Lands fire behavior analyses that the current risk of stand replacing wildfire along the lakeshore is low but it would increase with the absence of controlled burning (see Attachment # 5).
3. Periodic low intensity controlled burns can be appropriate on the lakeshore for fuel reduction to reduce the fire hazard to an acceptable level if they are performed in the following manner. There should be no commercial thinning associated with the burns. Heavy duff should be removed from around large trees to minimize the risk of excessive damage and mortality. In the Lakeshore area the size of burn areas would be limited to 40 acres or less in any one year. The objective of the burns should be to reduce the buildup of small woody debris to lessen the risk of a stand replacing fire. Care should be taken when altering the existing brush component.

#### **E. Noxious weeds**

1. Promptly establishing tree cover in those areas designated for white pine and ponderosa pine restoration will effectively shade out knapweed.
2. Care should be taken not to increase the noxious weed population. Any activity that could increase the risk of spread of noxious weeds should be very carefully scrutinized.
3. Farragut Park should work closely with Kootenai County noxious weed specialists and apply integrated management techniques to control and reduce the existing populations of noxious weeds. Herbicide applications should be used only where absolutely necessary. Applications should not be used where they could pose a danger to the public.

**F. Visitor use areas**

1. Visitors to Farragut Park are fiercely protective of the aesthetic experience in the lake/forest habitat. The quality of that experience should be protected by an updated master plan. (See Section G, 1).
2. The lakeshore is the primary use area for park visitors. There are trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, playgrounds, swimming areas and the boat launch area. Whatever is done must be compatible with heavy visitor use. No logging should be conducted in this area except as otherwise noted in this document.

**G. Other recommendations**

In order to ensure the best possible management of all future activities and developments in the Park, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Farragut State Park Master Plan was developed in 1975 and is outdated. An updated Master Plan for Farragut Park should be initiated by FY 2004 and should be in place before any further developments are implemented.
2. It should be deemed a high priority to cleanup the prior logging projects on the north side.

**IV. Future oversight**

- A. The CAC recommends that the agencies develop an objective monitoring protocol to verify compliance with the work plans and prescriptions.
- B. The committee recommends that an oversight subcommittee be formed. This committee (appointed/approved by both the CAC and the agencies) would be made up of volunteers who live near the Park and have the time and interest to observe any prescribed FSPNRP work performed. If the subcommittee believes there is a compliance problem, a meeting would be scheduled with the agencies involved to address the perceived problem. Work may need to be stopped until the perceived problem is resolved.

**Attachments:**

1. Tasking document
2. Dr. Leon Neuenschwander (University of Idaho Professor Emeritus)
3. Dr. Arthur Partridge (University of Idaho Professor Emeritus)
4. Dan Brown (IDL); research findings on forest ecology
5. Don Wagner (IDL); fire behavior modeling
6. Public comment summary